

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION CHECKLIST

Project: California Tiger Salamander Genetics Study

Date: August 14, 2007

Nature of Action: Provide \$237,840 from the Central Valley Project Conservation Program to University of California at Davis to use molecular genetic tools to identify the most important regions and individual sites for California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*, or CTS) mitigation and recovery.

Location: The researchers will sample CTS throughout its range, as shown in the attached map.

Exclusion Category: A.3. Research activities, such as nondestructive data collection and analysis, monitoring, modeling, laboratory testing, calibration, and testing of instruments or procedures and non-manipulative field studies.

1. This action or group of actions will have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. No ☒ Uncertain ☐ Yes ☐
2. This action or group of actions will have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. No ☒ Uncertain ☐ Yes ☐
3. This action will have significant impacts on public health or safety. No ☒ Uncertain ☐ Yes ☐
4. This action will have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); No ☒ Uncertain ☐ Yes ☐

floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 5. | This action will have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks. | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | This action will establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. | This action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulative significant environmental effects. | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. | This action will have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by bureau or office | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. | This action will have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>

On June 21, 2007, Reclamation initiated informal consultation with the Service on the activities for projects in the CVPCP and the HRP for Fiscal Year 2007. The Service concurred on August 21, 2007 that the projects, including this CTS study, are not likely to adversely affect listed species. |
| 10. | This action threatens to violate Federal, state, local, or tribal law or requirements imposed for protection of the environment. | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> |

11. This action will have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898). No ☒ Uncertain ___ Yes ___
12. This action will limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites. No ☒ Uncertain ___ Yes ___
13. This action will affect Indian Trust Assets (To be completed by Reclamation official responsible for ITAs) No ☒ Uncertain ___ Yes ___
14. This action will contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species. (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112) No ☒ Uncertain ___ Yes ___

NEPA Action: Categorical Exclusion ☒ EA ___ EIS ___

Environmental commitments, explanation, and/or remarks:

In 2004, the CTS was listed rangewide as threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. The species has declined or disappeared from a large fraction of its previously known populations, and it is continuing to decline as a result of factors ranging from the introduction of

exotic predators to hybridization with non-native barred tiger salamanders. However, all data indicate that the primary reason for decline is habitat loss. Thus, the most important single management tool available for recovering the CTS is the identification of the largest and most robust populations, including the habitat that they require for long-term stability.

This project has three interrelated objectives. All objectives will use molecular genetic tools as specified in the above proposal to identify the most important regions and individual sites for CTS mitigation and recovery. These objectives and tasks include:

- 1) On the species regional scale, determine the fundamental management units that must be protected to ensure overall protection of the CTS.
- 2) Within each of these regions, determine how accurately the actual population size of specific breeding sites can be estimated by physical and landscape characteristics.
- 3) Determine the dynamics of the hybrid swarm between native and non-native tiger salamanders in central California, and whether this swarm is expected to expand or contract in the near future.

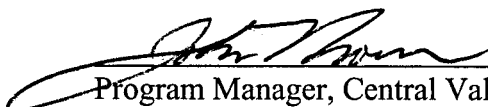
Approved:

 Date: 8-22-07
Preparer's Name and Title: Environmental Specialist

Regional Archeologist concurrence with Item 7: See attachment

ITA Designee concurrence with Item 10: See attachment

Concurrence:

 Date: 8-30-07
Program Manager, Central Valley Project Conservation Program

Approved:


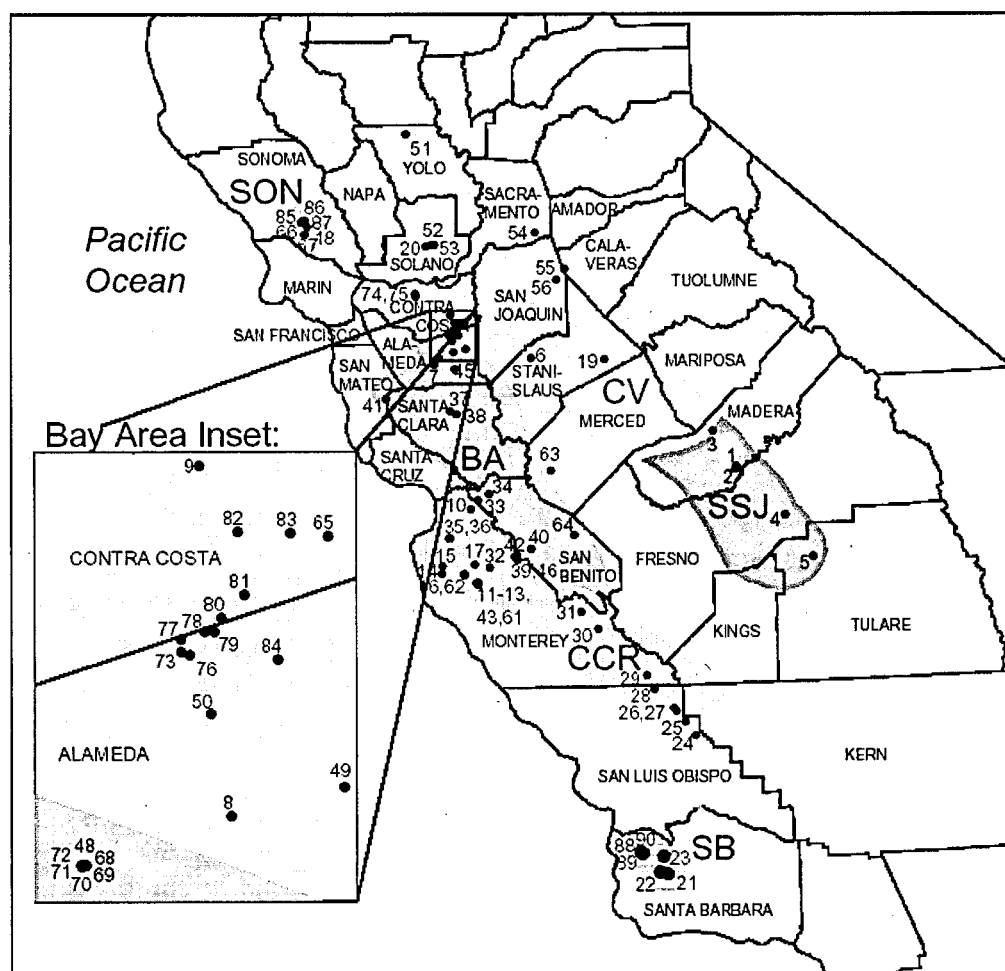
 Date: 9-4-07
Regional Environmental Officer

Figure 1. Range of CTS, showing most of the proposed sampling sites for Task 1.



From: Adam Nickels
To: Kleinsmith, Douglas
Date: 8/31/2007 4:29:02 PM
Subject: CEC CTS Genetics Study

Project No. 07-MPRO-304

Doug,

The proposed undertaking to provide funding from the Central Valley Project Conservation Program to the University of California Davis to conduct genetic studies of the California Tiger Salamander has no potential to affect historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.3(a)(1).

The action is administrative in nature and will result in no potential to affect historic properties.

I concur with line 7 of the CEC California Tiger Salamander Genetics Study dated August 14, 2007

Location: Though the range of the CTS in California.

Exclusion: A.3

This concludes the Section 106 process for this undertaking. Please retain a copy of this concurrence with the CEC file. Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Adam Nickels

Adam M. Nickels
Archaeologist
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
2800 Cottage Way, MP-153
Sacramento, CA 95825
916-978-5053
anickels@mp.usbr.gov

CC: MP-153

From: Patricia Rivera
To: Kleinsmith, Douglas
Date: 8/31/2007 11:42:59 AM
Subject: Re: CVPCP 2007 CECs ITA Requests

Doug,

I have reviewed the six Categorical Exclusion Checklists for the CVPCP projects per your request . All are studies, plans, or community outreach with no construction, land purchase or surface disturbance.

The Pine Hills Preserve fuels reduction plan: The proposed action does not affect Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA to the proposed site is approximately 3 miles ESE and it is the Shingle Springs Rancheria.

The Tipton kangaroo rat relocation study: The proposed action does not affect Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA to the proposed site is approximately 28 miles ENE and it is the Tule River Reservation.

The California tiger salamander genetics study: The proposed action does not affect Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA to the proposed site is approximately 35 miles WNW and it is the Lytton Rancheria.

The Alameda County private ranches outreach: The proposed action does not affect Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA to the proposed site is approximately 38 miles WNW and it is the Lytton Rancheria.

The riparian brush rabbit genetics study: The proposed action does not affect Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA to the proposed site is approximately 26 miles SSW and it is a Public Domain Allotment.

The propagation and reproduction of the metcalf jewelflower study: The proposed action does not affect Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA to the proposed site is approximately 35 miles SE and it is the a Public Domain Allotment.

Patricia

>>> Douglas Kleinsmith 8/23/2007 2:50 PM >>>

Patricia,

Attached are ITA requests for the six Categorical Exclusion Checklists for the CVPCP projects. All are studies, plans, or community outreach with no construction, land purchase or surface disturbance.

Doug